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ABSTRACT

As a central feature of China's current domestic policy, rural resettlement is considered a vital strategy for combating revisionism, consolidating the proletariat dictatorship, restricting bourgeois rights, narrowing differences, strengthening the countryside, and promoting agricultural development. Since rural China has suffered from excessive urban migration, rusticated youth are perceived as the catalytic agents needed to transform the countryside and agriculture. Avoiding the collectivization of the 1958 Commune Movement, rural peasants migrated to the cities where excessive natural increase, the search for a production breakthrough (the Great Leap Forward), and the Sino-Soviet split were causing severe food and infrastructural problems. Consequently, in the early sixties, some 20 million people were transferred to the countryside, and in 1963, the government officially decided to stabilize China's urban population at 10 million. The result of insufficient numbers of youth in rural areas with appropriate training for rural employment, the Cultural Revolution of the sixties revolutionized education in China by emphasizing practical skills and agricultural orientations at the expense of intellectualism. Therefore, the policy of rusticating the youth constitutes the core of Chinese economic development, and its success will depend upon whether or not Chinese youth remain in the countryside. (JC)

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The Contribution of Rural Sociology

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After ten months I wasn't the same,
leaving with much more than I came,
I had filled in the gaps in my education,
and learnt that it's labour that
 moulds the nation.

Song by Li fang in Peking Review 1959.6.

Any analysis in depth of China's economic development situation demands attention to the problems of youth, since they are the seedbed that nourishes agricultural talent and the future generation of farmers. Close inspection of China's youth policy finds that it is at the centre of a socio-political controversy. The economic scope of the youth policy is also important. The investigator however, is confronted with an array of developments which does not fill one with much joy largely because developments taking place are not only radical but necessarily complex and changeable on a vast scale.

Behind the hallowed walls of the universities and agricultural colleges since the Chinese Cultural Revolution has been almost unbelievable chaos. One learns for instance of the turnabout in teaching and attitudes towards professors, that tenure, pay, career structure, etc. and disciplinary studies are all thrown out of the window to de-élitize the system and bring teaching closer to the needs of the masses. This is the generational conflict, well known elsewhere, brought forth in the extreme. This is the best publicized version of the transformation of teaching in China, but the whole situation is essentially more complex than mere radical violence. This transformation is not a total rejection of the old agricultural education system. In fact, there has been much effort to preserve some of the best efforts China has traditionally had to offer the world in this respect. In essence, the changes are supposed to be designed to reach the peasant farmer in a more effective way and particularly to get research and extension workers to actually assist farmers in their work and lives.

An incident related in Chinese Youth (1) some time ago put it this way concerning the relationship between the peasants and cadres:

"When a farmer finally screwed up enough courage to actually contact one of the cadres, he invariably left the discussion more confused and disillusioned than when he arrived, feeling in his heart that, perhaps he could have spent his day better employed cleaning out the manure from

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the pigsty. At least then he would have got that job done rather than still have it waiting over until tomorrow."

Mao Tse-tung has said that research must be brought closer to the needs of the masses, (2) and a great deal of build-up in the Chinese press has been given to the need for bringing understanding closer to the peasants. China has faced for some time all of the classic problems of the West and Japan in this respect - a draining of rural resources and rural-urban migration. In the course of industrialization in the West and elsewhere, peasants migrated to the cities in large numbers to take up industrial and tertiary sector jobs, causing a gradual decline in the rural population and starving the countryside of the necessary talents for its future survival (3). Conscious of this historical experience, many developing countries drafted ambitious plans in the hope that industrialization would absorb increasing numbers of migrants - thus solving the combined problems of unemployed and surplus labour. Contrary to expectations, many less developed countries are now experiencing a growing level of urban unemployment in spite of significant rises in industrial output and GNP (4).

The high rate of rural to urban migration which has been taking place in less developed countries has also had a long history in China: the traditional saying: "to go to the city to become a Mandarin" typifies this problem. Many peasants migrate not so much because of the jobs awaiting them, but because the city is viewed as a refuge from the rural poverty trap and they are in most cases willing to endure the worst effects of urbanization, slums, shanty towns, disease, destitution, crime, etc. on the expectation of some future good - especially better education and opportunities for their children. Nevertheless, third world urbanization is at once a cause and effect of underdevelopment. Many less developed countries become trapped in the vicious circle of urbanization/population which retards economic development (5). Urban unemployment arises because the supply of urban labour far exceeds the capacity of the urban industrial sector to generate new jobs. For instance, in the period 1949-1961 China's urban population grew at the rate of 4.6 per cent. a year, while industrial employment grew by less than 3 per cent. At the same time, the development of the rural sector stagnated, starved of the necessary talent to modernize, this in turn made the government less willing to invest in such a poorly responsive population.

Experience of the Great Leap Forward (1958), for instance, also showed that the rapid big-push effect by the development of industrial enclaves did not by itself provide the impetus for self-sustaining development. In a predominantly agricultural economy such as China's, beset as it is with rapid population growth, poor infrastructure and lack of talent, self-sustained economic development requires integrated rural development alongside and in partnership with industry. This has now become a major policy objective of the Chinese government. Rural development requires the injection not only of cash and industrial inputs, but a wide range of technical skills as well as a new generation of farmers backed by education, health and other rural services.

This is of course easier said than done. In the words of the popular song, just how do you keep 'em down on the farm? China's answer to this problem has been a massive re-ordering of its rural social policy especially in the area of youth and education which, when taken into conjunction with its aims of self-sufficiency, decentralization and emulation of the Tachai

Brigade type of farm model, will be the basic form of future rural development. I propose to examine aspects of this policy towards youth in the short time available here.

Obviously to outsiders looking in on China, the Resettlement Policy (xiafang), literally 'downward transfer', with all its controversial aspects, is the most intriguing, and this forms the core of this discussion later, but in fact youth policy in China is concerned with the broad problems facing youth in any developing economy: aspirations, attitudes, job satisfaction, educational attainment and generational aspects. Rural youth, in any case, is a rather loose subject, meaning different things to different countries. And youth itself can be defined and examined in several ways. I distinguish four basic definitions, according to:

- (1) formal organization - members of youth leagues, unions, etc.;
- (2) environment - i.e. all those living in the countryside regardless of membership of organization or professional occupation;
- (3) professional occupation - i.e. apprentices or farm boys; and
- (4) those who belong to a prospective peasant or working class.

Each definition has its own particular problems.

The difficulty in defining youth is twofold:

What are the differences between urban and rural youth? and

When does youth begin and end?

With regard to the latter, China has conveniently defined youth as all those "between the ages of 15 and 25 regardless of class, training or occupation" (6). Contrast this with an FAO working group study (7) which arrived at a definition of age grades stretching from 9-12 years to 25-30 years. However, rural sociologists tend to agree that youth is that period in life when all the most vital decisions for one's future have to be made. Hence, in China the political nature of this decision-making period in an individual's life receives the highest priority "youth is an important period of intellectual and political as well as physical growth. . . people should spend most of their energy at this crucial period in their lives on study, political ideology and work, thus laying the foundations for success in later life" (8).

Youth organizations

These are for character moulding, decision making and political orientation. The main ones are as follows:

(1) Creches/Nurseries

Children are admitted to creches, nurseries, kindergarten etc. at the age of 18 months onwards until time for primary school. This period is a basic one for instilling social consciousness and feeling of patriotism. Children are encouraged in work and play to participate in meaningful art and drama albeit at a low level which tends to reflect the collective spirit.

(2) Youth League

In the 1965 People's Handbook the Youth League was the second organization listed, coming immediately after the Communist Party itself. Headed by a First Secretary, it had a secretariat consisting of 8 members, a standing committee of 29, and a central committee of 178 members. The 1953 Constitution stated that the Youth League was the 'reserve force' of the party. There were provincial, municipal and district committees and a network of

branches in industry, villages and universities. Membership is open to both sexes between ages of 15 and 25. An interesting feature is the fact that older people still retain membership rights, often occupying leading positions. Estimated membership is between 25-30 million. It is an urban based organization.

In April 1964 Youth Daily complained that less than 13 per cent. of rural youth were members. And some 10 per cent. of brigades didn't have a single member! During 1965 and 1966 greater efforts for rural recruitment were reported both in Youth Daily and Chinese Youth. Emphasis was placed on recruitment of youth from remote, backward areas.

In addition to the aims stated in the Constitution that the Youth League is a reserve of Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the League also plays a role in the model building approach to moral and political education with imitation plus self-criticism (the mirror technique of micro-teaching). Since the Cultural Revolution more emphasis has been placed on aiding agriculture and village renewal.

(3) Young Pioneers

Closely linked with the Youth League, the pioneers first appeared in 1949 as the Children's Corps of China. In June 1953 it was established as the Young Pioneers, based on Red Army traditions in liberated rural bases. Emphasis was on sociability, motivation towards free-expression and teaching of simple skills. But the pioneers also played a tactical role by acting as guides and messengers to the Red Army.

No historical picture of this period is complete without the village children's squad armed with red tasselled spears and red scarves marching in order and singing of the future liberation of their country. They were the eyes and ears of the army or militia. In June 1953 7 million members were reported and the aims had been modified to serving the collective. By 1962 there were some 50 million youths as members. All children between ages of 9 and 15 are eligible. The simple leadership training is based on a three tier hierarchy of seven to thirteen members formed into a group, a two to five group forming a team, and two or more teams a brigade.

The Youth League provides leadership but also to a limited extent the pool of primary school teachers. The Pioneers adopt the type of ritual and ceremony most children enjoy - adoption of a flag, a special salute etc. as well as secret signs to a gang howl or cry. Be ready to struggle for the communist cause", to which the reply is - "Ever ready". The main activities centre around play with responsibility, disciplined habits, patriotism and elementary skills. Also bob-a-job community type involvement, collecting litter, cutting grass, and scrap collection.

(4) All China Youth Federation

This all-embracing group aims at strengthening youth solidarity. It is a union of all youth groups, arranged in chapters along the lines of a US type fraternity. It holds an annual congress and seeks to unite youth everywhere and provide a forum for youth problems of all kinds.

(5) Red Guards

This organization is now well known outside China. It was formed at the height of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, and tended to eclipse both the Youth League and the Young Pioneers. Some confusion appears when referring to the Red Guards as if it were a single organization. Although official existence was acknowledged in para 9 of the CC CCP decision on the Cultural Revolution, 8 August 1966, when the party welcomed them as 'something new and of great historic importance', the Guards never had any formal constitution or meaning. Outwardly, at least, they appeared much the same as any other organization at that time except that they adopted the uniform of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), red armband, the obligatory copy of the Red Book, and the endless chanting of slogans. Significant differences, however, existed both in organization and methods up and down the country some, notably in Peking, were determined and effective opponents and critics of the government, well organised and centrally led, whilst others played a totally disruptive role and ran into trouble with their local administrations and peasants.

When the movement spread to the factories and farms, some were even able to influence managerial decisions and their influence on the management system was profound for a time. Others found themselves continually in conflict locally and nationally. In Shanghai, at the height of the CR, up to 8 groups vied with each other at one time. As the CR developed, attempts were made within and without to bring all organization under one command - the so-called Red Guard Congress was one such attempt in Peking, during February 1967. But this period tended to coincide with the heyday of the movement and from that time on the groups lost power and declined in importance. Opinion tended to harden against youth leadership and youth generally throughout this period amongst sections of government and industry and finally the army had to slip in and break up more disruptive bands, placing them on remote farms. The student body generally was found incapable of responsibility and the role of peasants began to be consolidated. Less emphasis on youth and more on experience became the order of the day. Resettlement of youth then was stepped up to re-vitalize rural areas, many of which had suffered from the Cultural Revolution.

Literature Review

For the most part, descriptions of the life and times of rural youth in China are hidden in the descriptions and political analyses of agriculture and rural policy in general. Material in the journals Chinese Youth, Youth Daily etc. is almost all political orientated, dealing very little with the problems said to be confronting youth elsewhere in the world, and the more relevant problems of Chinese youth are hardly touched on in the daily press, unless dealing with aspects of the resettlement campaign or progress in youth clubs. Hence, the problems coming under the heading "behaviour and orientation problems of rural youth", the subject of a lengthy study containing 201 references in Yugoslavia and published in 1975 in Sociologija Sela (9), hardly arise for discussion in China, although we must assume that problems of growing up are no less acute there than in Yugoslavia and elsewhere.

We have also for instance, many instances in Soviet literature dealing with youth along the following lines, all published recently:

'the general attitude of youth to rural life', 'the influence of youth on the rural milieu', 'problems of social mobility', and 'the problem of migration of youth from agriculture into industry'. Outside the Soviet Union rural youth problems are now considered an important policy area within the whole field of rural development. For investigations on rural youth at single village level, a few examples may be taken from early editions of Chinese Youth and People's Daily, where statements have been made about aspirations, motivations and self-images of youth. In most cases, these earlier articles have pointed out the disadvantages confronting rural youth, i.e. low socio-economic status compared with urban youth, lower educational attainment and the lower aspirations of rural youth compared with city youth generally. Thus the widely accepted Chinese communist hypothesis that the rural way of life is superior to the urban life, from the standpoint of personality development, has been challenged. This could not be accepted officially since the idea fostered at the highest government level has been "to go to the countryside is a splendid thing", a typical slogan of the Cultural Revolution. Although moral questions have been raised throughout this period and problems of marriage, especially "deferred marriage" as a means of lowering the birth rate has been discussed. In an article dealing with living standards and moral standards in Youth Daily in 1962 Wang ch'e commented. . . "While the moral rules of society are determined by the economic system and the interests of the predominant class . . . A person's moral position is determined by his environment. Morals cannot be viewed in isolation but is an integral part of formation and training. We must show concern for youth's living standards on the one hand and step up ideological and political education on the other. . . Parents must understand that morals are an integral part of education for national construction. We should increase our sense of responsibility in this respect, seek to improve methods of education and see that children are willing to accept the correct views of parents and that family education plays its due part in national construction". (10) During the Cultural Revolution a heavy political content clouded the real issues of rural youth in China.

The Revolution in Education

I now wish to consider the developments in the educational and occupational spheres. This mainly concerns educational and training changes and occupational choice. The former involves the so-called "revolution in education" at all levels and what influence this has on the future demands of agriculture. The radical changes brought about in the middle sixties were largely as a result of the hypothesis that the proportion of peasant families' children leaving farming altogether - "to leave agriculture for the town" - was directly related to the level and type of education received, and the lack of suitable conditions in rural areas. Even if peasants' sons lived in areas with a high educational opportunity, it was then doubly certain that the sons would not choose farming as a career. Accounts of these conditions in the Chinese press are often contradictory but by the middle sixties an active campaign was being waged amongst educated farm youth to "look upon farming with resolution and joy", and to make the countryside take on a new meaning (10). Pressure was brought to bear for the first time for educated farm youth to return to their villages after a period of education, and the press began to be filled with accounts of disgruntlement and dissatisfaction (12).

Articles in China Youth at this time tended to reflect a rosy picture of the countryside, not entirely based on fact. Glossy journals such as China Pictorial and China Reconstructs pictured healthy, strong youths

helping with the harvest, in a busy vibrant countryside, and young farm boys were held to be the optimum type of recruit for the Peoples' Liberation Army. However, other surveys on the state of health of rural youth at this time have provided a different picture for political ideologists. Chinese rural youth, contrary to official opinion, were found to have handicapped and less well nourished groups and had more serious illnesses than urban youth. Diseases found to be rife in rice regions were Bilharzia and Filariasis and public health programmes were given priority after 1960. A complete snail eradication programme aimed at combating endemic snail fever and other diseases.

With regard to the second category of changes, i.e. occupational choice, in China, following the changes referred to earlier, this was concerned with two major problems. How to resettle educated youths in the right job in rural areas in preference to the city, and how to guide those who migrate into respective rural employment and the placement of surplus urban youth in farm employment. The question now arises: 'What place does choice have in this situation?' In the effort to modernize agriculture and provide rural areas with the necessary skills for this modernization process, a major task of the central government has been to get enough suitable recruits to work in agriculture. This latter problem has been most acute in the most backward areas of the economy. Alas, from the youths' point of view, remote rural areas are not the most attractive areas of the country to further one's ambitions. Naturally, many articles on youth have tackled this point i.e. the lack of career opportunities in the countryside. A slogan campaign was first conducted in 1962 and intensified in 1966 to combat the undesirable tendency to put one's own desires before those of the collective. So we get such repeated phrases as "to farm for the revolution", "to go to the countryside is a fine thing", and to "look on farming with glory and joy". Up until the beginning of the seventies, although a large proportion of China's population was engaged in backward agriculture, only a very small proportion of youth were opting for agriculture of their own free will. Old traditions die hard and it seems the peasants themselves were advising sons to take up commerce in preference to farming (14).

Resettlement

Now, if we accept, as most authorities do, that migration has a selective effect in that it uproots the more intelligent and receptive members of the population, and also that the bulk of China's population is under twenty-years of age, events following the commune movement in 1958 meant that China's rural economy was slowly being drained of its best talent. From the Communist Party's point of view something had to be done and done quickly to stem the flow. A process of reverse migration or "back to the land" movement seemed the most expedient method. After all, we have some evidence of the success of this kind of movement in Meiji Japan and in the USA with the land grant movement in between the wars, and certain movements in Europe and elsewhere. However, the scale of China's movement in this respect makes it unique. One point that should be clarified at this point is that the rustication of youth movement (xiangxiang-shangshan - "down to the villages and up to the hills movement") is connected with but distinct from the xiafang or "downward transfer" movement, or decentralization of personnel referred to earlier. This latter system is a blanket term covering the transfer of all intellectuals at all levels regardless of age to the countryside for a single or recurring period of their working life, generally reckoned at at least a month a year, or for a three month stretch in some cases such as students, teachers and intellectuals. The emphasis is on "manual labour in order to remould the personality".(15) The former "down to the villages" is a rustication movement aimed specifically at youth with the emphasis on permanent settlement

"for one's natural life". There seems to be some confusion on this point, even within China itself, even at the present time, and great numbers of youth have escaped or attended largely because they did not realize it was "for life". The terminology reflects this division between the two forms of settlement. The xia'xiang movement talks of "putting down roots" (luoho) and youths being "inserted" (chadiu) into the villages (16). Contrast this with the equally evocative terminology of xiafang. Those "decentralized" go to the countryside to "squat" (dundian) "to observe, learn and return refreshed". (17) The target population of both programmes is still, however, youth.

Because rural areas provide the widest arena where [youth] can contribute to resources. What should they do there? (1) they are required to take part in labour re-inforcing the front line of agricultural production; (2) they are required to delve into agricultural technique; (3) they should study experience gained in the management and operation of collective production and explore further the laws governing the country way of life; (4) they should also make a success of cultural, educational and public health work in the countryside, and fitfully play an active role in the mechanization of agriculture (18). The countryside is a place where youth can fulfill their activities best where "An inexhaustable supply of natural riches is waiting out there for them to explore. . . Many fair-minded and capable persons are required to do work as team leaders, accountants, storekeepers and technicians at various levels. How can it be said that one cannot make anything out of farming. . . that it has no future? With a fervent love for the countryside we can surely emerge with outstanding achievements" (19).

Youth can be divided up thus: (1) middle school leavers; (2) graduates of universities and colleges of agriculture and other tertiary level institutions; (3) urban unemployed youth; (4) young cadres whose skills are surplus to industrial needs; (5) dissident youth; and (6) certain members of youth organizations. In theory at least, the voluntary nature of this arrangement is stressed. In practice, however, an appeal to individual youth altruism is backed by pressure, "struggle by reasoning". Other reports indicate that family livelihood may be threatened, i.e. by loss of food rations or job restrictions, etc. Estimates of actual numbers re-deployed under rustication vary. A figure of 40 million since the project began was given by the deputy Minister of Agriculture in 1964 (20). The basic criteria for youth participation in the re-settlement campaign has changed little since first conceived by Mao as early as the Kiangsi period (1930). The total number sent to rural areas in 1975 was given as 2 million (21). This figure was considered "higher than recent years" (22). However, the record year may have been in 1969 when the Army "redeployed" large numbers of Red Guards in the countryside after the Cultural Revolution had blown its full course. Usually, one child per household is permitted to remain at home but others are now expected to fulfil their countryside service. In 1974, in order to combat the changes being made by parents that the system was "inhuman", an innovation called the chuchow model was established (23). This followed a pattern set in chuchow whereby a link was established between recipient communes on the one hand, and donor families, schools and factories on the other. Parents were encouraged to play a more active role in resettlement and re-settled youths obtained a subsidy payment for the first year or two to alleviate domestic upheavals. Regular visits are now a part of the programme and a recent report also indicated that local marriages have been arranged and youths are allowed to bring parents where possible to avoid break up of families (24). A further development

in 1975 was reported from Kiangsi province where after consultation with rusticated youth and peasants in recipient villages the local administration concluded that "a widely dispersed programme for youth was inappropriate and it would be better in future to have more relative concentration". The result was that "special youth teams" and so called "youth farms" were established where young people were able to work together in their own environment thus causing less generational conflict in the settlement areas (25).

Historical Basis

The back to the land movement is not unique either in China or elsewhere. It is the scale of the programme which is significant. China is attempting to do in one giant step what other countries have regarded as essentially a long-term goal. In late Imperial China for instance, a significant proportion of the socio-political elite, imperial degree holders and bureaucrats came from the landed gentry. The literati who passed the low level examination proceeded to the province and, if successful, went on to the imperial capital to participate in the imperial civil service exams. Those who failed, or failed to obtain a post, returned to their villages. Even the successful candidates would eventually return to their ancestral home on retirement. In the ancestral lands these scholars and retired bureaucrats made up the local elite and brought the necessary expertise to the countryside. It was the geographical distribution of these elites which was uneven and thus led to degeneration of rural communities.

Fei Hsiao-tung, for instance, has described a cyclical pattern of the distribution of elites in China which would account for the viability of China's late imperial countryside. In his opinion, the socio-economic profile of rural China often drawn by observers of a parasitic elite living off the surplus farm economy is wrong (26). No doubt there were abuses but by and large the traditional countryside benefited from the two-way shift of expertise. During the Nationalist period this pattern ceased to function properly. The more prosperous and ambitious youth gravitated to the treaty ports or even worse, emigrated to receive their education in an entirely different environment. Those who did eventually return brought a completely new life style, by and large incompatible with the Chinese rural tradition. Under such conditions, the urban environment became more attractive to youth, and the rural-urban exodus became an established feature of modern China. As early as 1920 Mao was said to be seeking a regeneration of the countryside by inducing young intellectuals to stay and spark off the necessary modernization (27). This return, if you like to a traditional solution to a modern dilemma, fits in well with many current policies in Chinese communist society.

Urbanization

China has experienced excessive urbanization in the past 20 years in absolute if not relative terms (see app. 1.). The trend and the scope of urbanization are unmistakable. Between 1949 and 1957, while the total population approx. increased 18 per cent. and the rural population 14 per cent., urban population grew by almost 60 per cent. The result was that the proportion of the urban population in the total population rose in 1950 to 14 per cent. in 1955. Two factors accounted for this (1) natural increase in the urban areas; and (2) rural-urban migration. In the 1950s the natural growth rate in urban areas was higher than in rural areas, due to lower urban mortality rates, also large numbers of farmers migrated to urban areas. Higher wages, labour insurance, and health services

were offered in urban areas.

In spite of all efforts to promote resettlement, we still read of accounts in the Chinese press which present a gloomy picture of the actual performance. Still a serious problem, judging from the constant exhortations, is the lack of youthful enthusiasm. There has been a gradual drifting back of youths to the cities and cases are even cited where this has been actively encouraged by some industries starved of skilled labour. The Canton local administration openly criticized some factories for unauthorised recruitment of rusticated youth in the province in 1975. In other provinces there have also been accounts of rusticated youth finding work in nearby towns. The tradition in China of parents passing on their jobs to children on retirement has also offered a loophole to some youths to take up urban employment again. Higher education does not provide exemption only deferrment since intellectual youth are assigned to rural areas upon graduation.

Conclusion and Summary

Resettlement is now a central feature of current rural policy. The programme is considered to be of "far reaching significance for combating revisionism, consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, restricting bourgeois rights and for gradually narrowing the 'three great differences' for strengthening the countryside and promoting the development of agriculture" (29). Rusticated youth are, therefore, catalytic agents of the transformation of agriculture. China is thus determined to stabilize its urban population and to re-vitalize the rural sector. The method is both controversial and necessary in view of structural imbalances in China's historical development. China experienced rapid urbanization since the 1920s in absolute if not relative terms. Between 1950 and 1960 while total population increased by about 18 per cent. and the rural population at 14 per cent., the urban population grew at a massive 60 per cent. This may be attributed to two major factors, natural increase and rural to urban migration. The natural growth rate was higher than in rural areas. The establishment of the Commune movement in 1958 caused many peasants to leave for the cities to avoid collectivization. This, together with China's search for a big break-through in production, known as the Great Leap Forward (GLF), caused severe food and infrastructural problems especially in the cities. A series of bad harvests and poor weather at this time continued until 1961. The experience of the so-called "three bitter years" was also exacerbated by the Sino-Soviet split and withdrawal of Soviet aid. Within a short space of time in 1961 some 20 million persons were "transferred" to the countryside and in 1963 (30) the government officially decided to stabilize China's urban population at around 10 million (31). China's young population continued to grow by about 2-3 million annually. This continued to create a reservoir of urban unemployment. Hence, the campaign to rusticate graduated youth and other categories of youth to the countryside in the 1960s.

The impact of the Cultural Revolution in the mid sixties was felt mainly in the field of education. Not only was China not getting sufficient youth in rural employment but she was not getting youth of the right training. In 1967 Mao Tse-tung issued the now famous May 7th Directive. This was aimed at intellectuals generally but also for students. While their main task was to study, they should in addition to their studies learn other things, that is, industrial work, farming and military affairs. The period of schooling was to be shortened, education revolutionized, and the domination of schools by intellectuals was not allowed to continue (32). On June 13, China decided to change the old system of holding entrance examinations for the enrolment of students in agricultural colleges. This

decision was announced in a notice issued by the CCP Central Committee and the State Council. On June 18, the People's Daily carried an editorial entitled "Carry Out the Cultural Revolution Thoroughly and Transform the Educational System Completely" with reference made to this announcement (33). On August 8, the "Decision of the CCP Central Committee Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" was adopted at the 11th Plenum of the 8th CCP Central Committee held in Peking from August 1 through 12. Article 10 on educational reform of this 16-Point Decision was concerned with orientating students towards agriculture and working in the countryside. The period of schooling was shortened. Courses were fewer and better. The teaching material was thoroughly transformed, in some cases beginning with simplifying complicated material. The role of the peasants themselves as teachers was stressed.

The results of these reforms have been strengthened by emphasis on decentralization of industry and self-sufficiency. Agricultural education and research is now supposed to be orientated to local conditions and the backward rural areas now benefit not only from improved health and services but also from new blood in the form of a young, active population. China's youth policy is, therefore, at the core of economic development generally and the success or failure of this policy will depend very largely in future on if China can effectively keep her youth "down on the farm".

FOOTNOTES

1. Chinese Youth 1963, 2, 2-17
2. Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung (Peking edition) 1964, Vol.2, p.554
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APPENDIX I.

URBAN POPULATION GROWTH IN CHINA

1950 - 1960

(in tens of thousands)

Year	Total Pop.	Urban Pop.*	Per cent.	Rural Pop.	Per cent.
1950	55,196	6,169	11.1	49,027	88.9
1955	61,465	8,285	13.5	53,180	86.5
1960	65,400	10,400	15.0	55,500	85.5

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- * Defined as city and town population of over 2000 pop.
- It does not include rural inhabitants living in metropolitan areas.

APPENDIX II.

GLOSSARY •

xiafang: lit.: downward transfer, transfer to a lower level. A movement to transfer intellectuals to rural areas. This represents China's application of Marx's principles of the elimination of differences between mental and manual labour. Every responsible person is expected to spend at least part of their working life in the countryside in this way.

xiaxiang lit: "down to the countryside" re-settlement of youth in rural areas. The full term is "xiaxiang shangshan" down to the villages and up to the hills. This is a direct form of re-settlement and applies mainly to youth.

dundian "to squat" lit: "to squat at a point". To get down and observe and discuss at grass roots level. This is a reference to intellectuals going to work at the basic level to acquaint themselves with actual farm conditions.

ganbu cadre. An individual holding a responsible position in the party, government or agriculture etc.

Tachai model. A brigade in Shansi province which came to the forefront in 1964 as a result of the members' persistence in raising productivity in the face of many obstacles. The brigade practices self-sufficiency and a new "democratic" system of remuneration. Under this system quotas and piece work rates have been dropped in favour of evaluating work-points according to: (1) labour attitude; (2) degree of skill; (3) willingness to undertake unpleasant tasks; and (4) political orientation. Workers are assessed at monthly meetings of the whole brigade. Those receiving the highest ratings act as pace setters. Hence the title "pace - setter brigade".

* The latinization of Chinese script used in this text follows Chinese official spelling (pinyin).

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